

ON THE CUTTING EDGE

January 2007

Design Inspiration

This ensemble was inspired by a guild challenge to be creative with 2 yards of linen. Cutwork is a traditional technique that is often used to embellish linen. Here, I give it a modern edge by combining it with silk organza and by using a non-traditional color scheme. Every inch of the available fabric was used – the two small rectangles left after cutting out the jacket and pants were just enough to complete the purse.

Fabrics

Jacket and Pants: 100% linen, 100% silk organza.

Top: 100% sandwashed silk charmeuse, 100% rayon Bemberg lining.

Purse: 100% linen, 100% silk organza, 100% sandwashed silk charmeuse, 100% rayon Bemberg lining.

Embellishments

Jacket, pants and purse: machine-embroidered cutwork designs from Sadia Sews Designs.

Top: couched braid.

Patterns

Jacket: McCalls 4830 (modified).

Pants: Simplicity 4699.

Top: McCalls 4969.

Purse: original design.

Special Sewing Techniques

The elaborate machine-embroidered cutwork borders on the jacket and pants consist of several smaller motifs that have been grouped together in software to follow the design lines of these garments. These embroideries are stitched out using a water-soluble stabilizer. The linen fabric in the open areas of the embroidery and along the garment edges is carefully trimmed away before the final machine stitching is done. The entire jacket and the embroidered areas of the pant legs are underlined with silk organza. This underlining serves several purposes: it acts as a permanent stabilizer for the embroidery, as an interfacing for

the jacket, and as a decorative transparent inset for the cutwork. The organza is also used to finish the seams inside the jacket. The bodice of the top is lined to the edge and the bodice seam is decorated with a machine- and hand-couched braid.

Exhibitions and Awards

Judge's Choice, Full Ensemble, Mid-Atlantic Wearable Art Festival XIII, February 2007.

1st place, Fashion Apparel, NNEP Embroidery Classic, August 2007.

3rd place, Machine Embroidery, Sewing With Nancy 25th Anniversary Contest, May 2008.